

~~Between them all the poor little Rabbit was made to feel himself very insignificant and commonplace, and the only person who was kind to him at all was the Skin Horse, who was old and wise, and had lived longer in the nursery than any of the others.~~

START

*The Skin Horse enters, very old, very tired. He sits down near the Rabbit.*

*The Rabbit plucks up the courage to speak.*

RABBIT      What is "real"? Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?

HORSE        Real isn't how you are made. It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but really loves you, then you become real.

RABBIT      Does it hurt?

HORSE        Sometimes. When you are real, you don't mind being hurt.

RABBIT      Does it happen all at once, like being wound up, or bit by bit?

HORSE        It doesn't happen all at once. You become. Generally, by the time you are real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out, and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand.

RABBIT      I suppose you are real?

*He immediately regrets saying it.*

HORSE        The boy's uncle made me real. That was a great many years ago; but once you are real you can't become unreal again. It lasts for always.

*The Rabbit considers this. The Skin Horse leaves.*

NARRATOR: The Rabbit sighed. He thought it would be a long time before this magic called "Real" happened to him.

RABBIT      I wonder what it feels like, being real. Will i have to lose my whiskers? And my lovely coat?

*He thinks about this.*

END

Music: #3 – The Boy's Games

*The Boy comes into the Nursery and plays.*

NARRATOR    There was a person called Nanna, who ruled the nursery. Every now and then, for no reason whatever, she went swooping about like a great wind and hustled all the playthings away in cupboards. She called this 'tidying up' and the toys all hated it.

Music: #4 Tidying Up